

THE TIMES FOUNDED 1864
THE DISPATCH FOUNDED 1860

RICHMOND, VA., SUNDAY, APRIL 14, 1912.

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RICHMOND IS THE CITY BEAUTIFUL

Facts and Figures Gathered From the Building News of the Country.

GOOD HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF

Inspector Beck Is the Baron Hausmann of Richmond—Old Shacks of Reconstruction Era Making Room for Twentieth Century Beauty and Ornament.

BY FRANK S. WOODSON.
Building operations in all of the leading cities and towns of the country are on a boom. From an advanced sheet of Construction News, a publication in Chicago which tells once a month all about building operations in the country over, I gather some interesting facts. I quote from the advanced sheet:

"Building in the leading cities of the country for March shows a variety of conditions, and upon the whole a gain of 6 per cent over the corresponding month a year ago. In the larger cities there was a handsome increase, with the exception of Chicago, where the figures show a serious decrease as the result of the exceedingly cold weather and labor troubles. Illustrating clearly just how deplorably bad these two elements interfere with construction, there being a decrease of 59 per cent. In comparison with the same month a year ago. During the month just closed permits were taken out in seventy-three cities for the construction of 17,450 buildings, representing an investment of \$13,262,519, as against 21,771 buildings, involving a total investment of \$69,160,339 for the corresponding month a year ago, a decrease of 4,111 buildings and a gain of \$4,101,820, or 4 per cent."

Richmond's Good Showing.
Here follows a table which shows what seventy-three cities did in March of this year, and compares those doings with those of March of last year. This report shows that Richmond started the building of 129 houses last month, whereas in the month of March of last year, the building permits were for only ninety-four buildings. And yet the estimated cost of the 129 buildings of this year's March was considerably less than the estimated cost of the ninety-four buildings authorized to be erected in the month of March of last year. This is easily explained. In March of last year Inspector Beck issued permits for several industrial buildings, warehouses, etc., that cost a good deal of money to build, something like \$700,000. In the month of March of this year, the tendency seemed to have been to residential buildings, and the home-makers came in for 129 permits. Of course, it does not take quite as much money to build a little house as it does to build a big warehouse or a big ice cream factory or a big tobacco factory, and so, while the number of buildings that claimed license to exist in the month of March was much larger than the number to be given permits the same month of the year past, the amount of money to be spent in their erection was in the aggregate considerably less. And so it appears that while there has been no let down in the building activity, a little less money was put in circulation for building this March than for the same month of last year.

Things Moving On.
Since this March report was closed, permits have been asked and granted for more expensive buildings, skyscrapers, tenement houses, apartment houses, big stores, theaters, costly residences, etc., that will make the April figures something enormous. Already the value of the permits exceeds the value of those for the whole month of April of last year, and the month is just half gone.

The better thought about all of this Richmond building boom is that in every instance architectural beauty and ornament are characteristic of the new buildings, be they business houses on the skyscraper order, apartment houses on the fashionable streets, tenement houses, hospitals, private residences or what not. The people who are building, from the humblest home up to the skyscraper, seem to be showing civic pride, and there seems to be a general tendency to make Richmond the most beautiful of Southern cities.

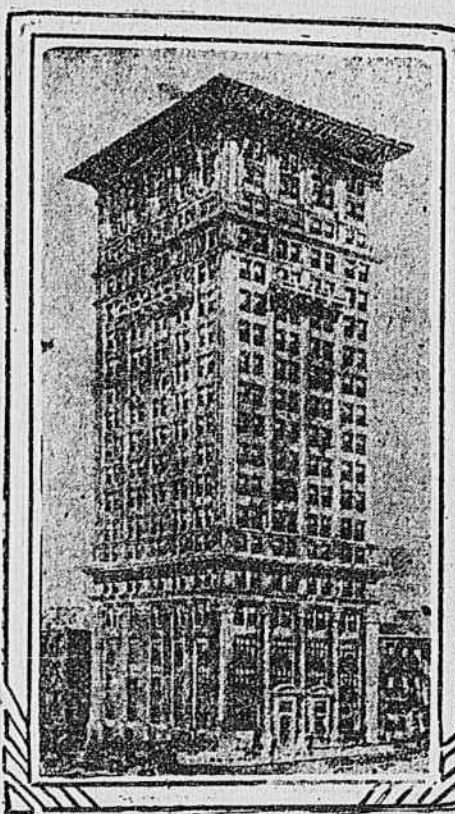
History Repeating Itself.
As everybody knows, Richmond about a half-century ago was burned down by the fires of war. The rebuilding was hurried and in a way was on the cheap order. The hurriedly built and cheap houses of all kinds are now making way for better and more substantial buildings.

France, under Bourbon rule, was cheaply built up. Napoleon III. came along and overthrew the Bourbons. He had been in power but a few weeks before he decided to make Paris the most beautiful city of all the world. He told the Bourbons they must pull down their old shacks and rebuild. He put Baron Hausmann in charge of this work. The baron was a regular czar, and the protests of the Bourbons had no effect upon him. First they wanted to stop him, but he would not be stopped. He ordered from the Emperor, and he obeyed them. He tore down and he rebuilt, and he made other folks rebuild where he tore down, and the result was that Napoleon's dream that Paris should be the beauty of the earth was realized before he went down under German fire. Oh, the Bourbons "cussed" Baron Hausmann to the utter end, but now their descendants rise up and call him blessed.

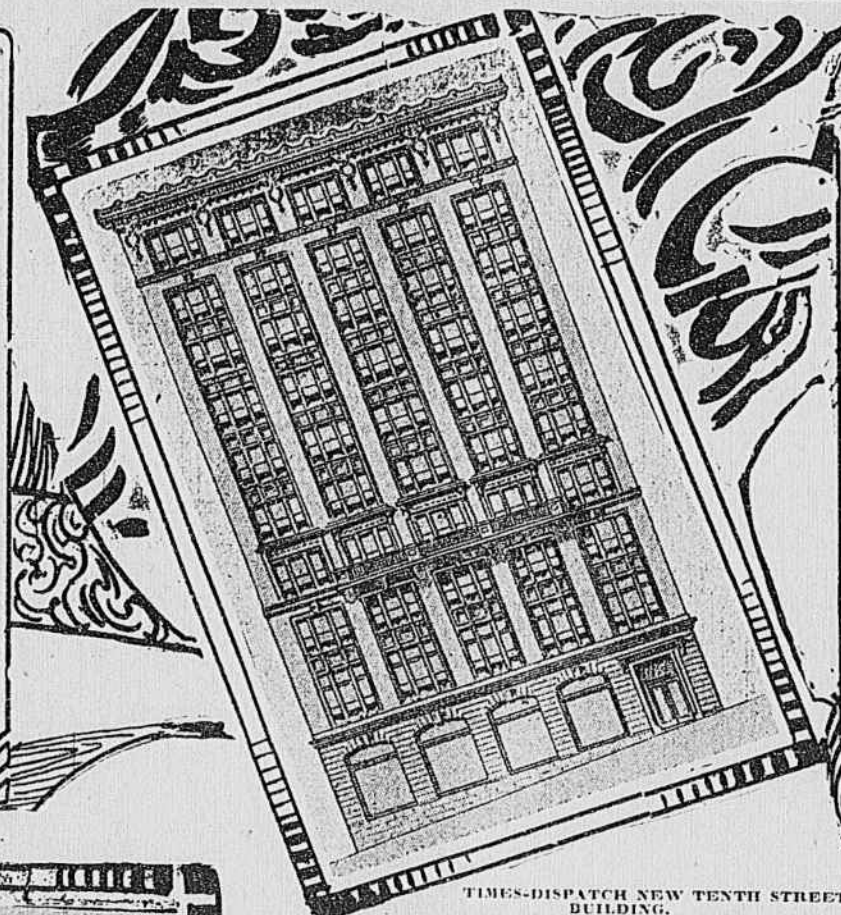
I heard a man say the other day that Inspector Beck is the Baron Hausmann of Richmond. May the Lord grant it. Go ahead, "Baron" Beck, with your good work. It looks very much as if Richmond in a small way is making some right good history repeat itself.

In this connection I want to say that Will Dabney, of the Chamber of Commerce, said to me the other day:

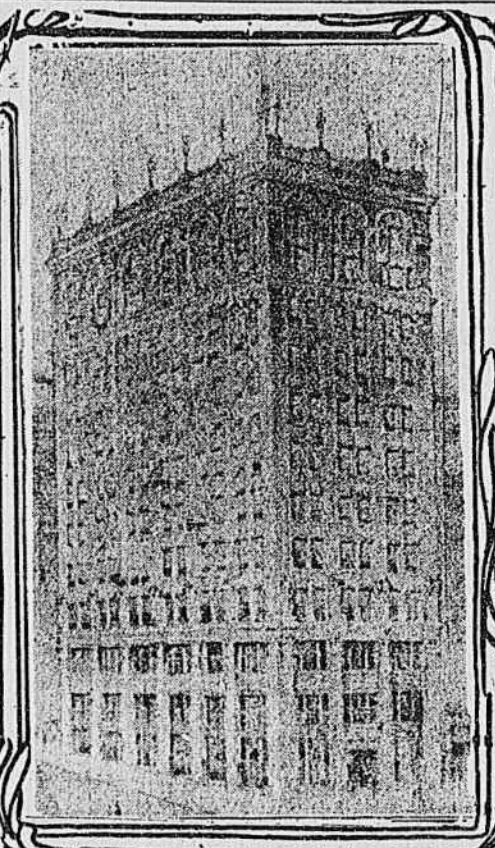
RICHMOND'S SKYSCRAPERS



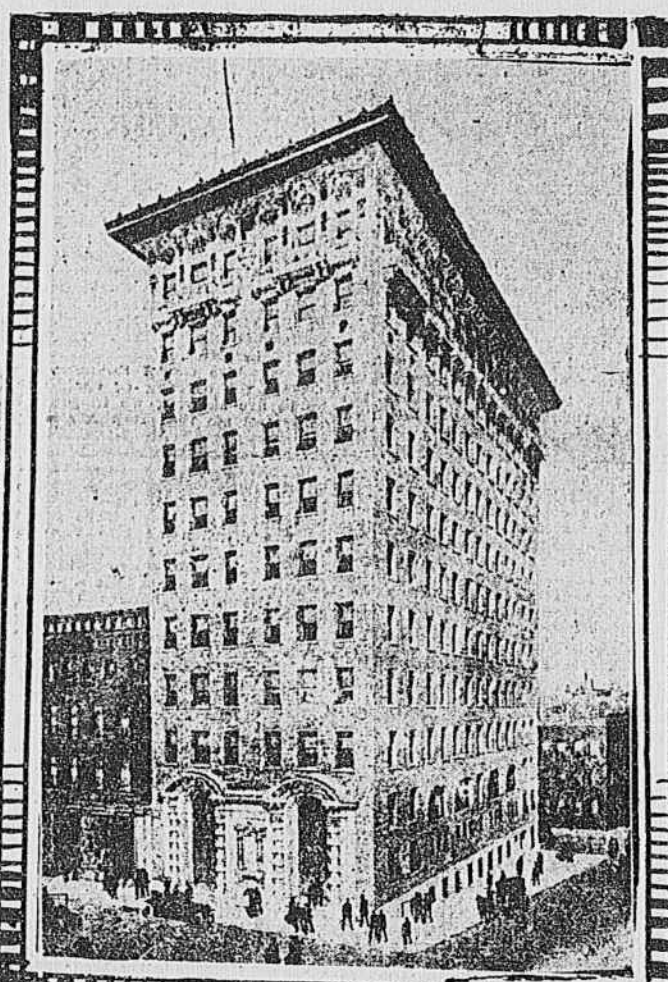
FIRST NATIONAL BANK.



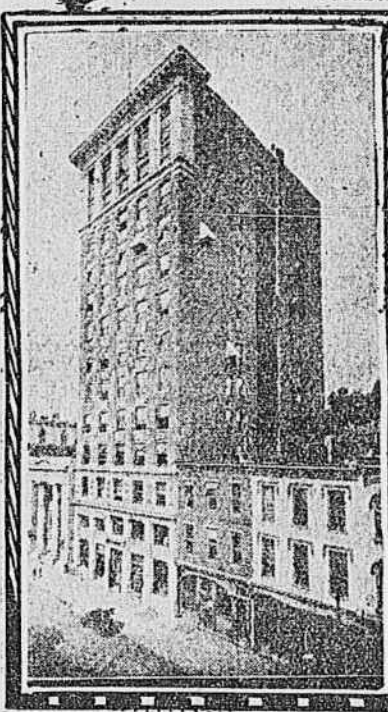
TIMES-DISPATCH NEW TENTH STREET BUILDING.



VIRGINIA RAILWAY AND POWER COMPANY'S OFFICES.



AMERICAN NATIONAL BANK BUILDING.



TRAVELERS' INSURANCE BUILDING.



MUTUAL BUILDING.

VIEWS AND NEAR VIEWS; HINTS AND SUGGESTIONS

As to Big Leaf Tobacco Doings, Virginia Still Leads—Some Further Facts About Buggy Building—Some Tricks in Trade—Various Hints and Some Suggestions.

BY FRANK S. WOODSON,
Industrial Editor.

This column is open to contributors who have something to say of a suggestive nature, and who are willing to make hints and suggestions looking to the better development of the good old State of Virginia. West Virginia and North Carolina, and who can hold their suggestions down in any one issue to from 150 to 200 words. Such communications, addressed to the Industrial Editor, will receive prompt attention.

Greatest in the World.

Editor Webb, of the Southern Tobacco Journal, sends this note of warning: "Danville, Va., will have to look to its laurels as Lexington, Ky., now claims the distinction of being the largest loose leaf tobacco market in the world. Heretofore Danville has claimed that honor. The Lexington market, they say, will sell 50,000,000 pounds of tobacco this tobacco year."

There is some here, it depends largely upon how you estimate the greatness of a market. One man may estimate by pounds, and another by dollars and cents. For instance, Lexington, Ky., may this year sell more pounds of the heavy loose leaf than Danville sells of the light, bright leaf, but how about the footing up of the dollar column? The loose leaf tobacco that Danville sells, being the high-priced bright goods, will average \$10 per hundred or more, perhaps, while that which

Lexington sells, being only Burley, will likely average far less per hundred. Lexington may prove to be the greater in the matter of pounds, although it will take the official figures to convince me of that, but in any event it is times to doubt that Danville will lead in the number of dollars required to handle the offerings. Danville is still the "greatest bright loose leaf tobacco market in the world," Lexington, Ky., to the contrary notwithstanding.

By the way, it has taken some Virginia talent—Silas Shelburne, of Richmond—to make Lexington the big loose leaf market it is. He went out there, built a warehouse and showed the Kentuckians a trick or two in the loose leaf business. And he is doing well at it, as he richly deserves to do.

More About Buggies.

William T. Dabney, the general business manager and high cockatoo of the Richmond Chamber of Commerce, accosted me on Main Street the other day and said: "You cannot talk too much on that buggy factory question. Richmond ought to have the biggest buggy and carriage factory in all the South, and it is going to have it, too, but a good deal of Richmond money has got to go into the enterprise. Keep up your good talk along this line, and in due time the big factory will turn up here."

Mr. Dabney told me confidentially that the recent remarks in the Views and Near Views column concerning buggy factories had caused not a little talk and brought to his desk not a few letters from outside folks. He tells me that some outsiders will be here within a week or two to take in

ITALIAN FARMERS OUT IN ARKANSAS

A Successful Colony of Fruit Growers and General Workers at Tontitown.

STORY WITH HINT TO VIRGINIA

How the North Italians Are Making Good Cultivating the Southern Lands.

BY W. J. LAUCK.
The Italian immigrant of recent years has shown himself to be a capable wage-earner in the packing houses of Kansas City. He has also been a successful mine-worker in the coal-producing districts surrounding Pittsburg, Kansas and McAlester, Oklahoma. It is not generally known, however, that members of this race have engaged in farming and have established themselves in a number of localities in the South and Southwest. One of the most successful communities is that of Tontitown, Ark., where the North Italian immigrant is meeting with success as a fruit-grower and a general farmer. Desirable immigrants and young buyers of this class may be brought to Virginia.

The Italian farming community of Tontitown is situated among the Ozark Mountains. Thirty years ago the locality was a wilderness similar to thousands of acres that today lie idle in the Ozark regions of Arkansas and Missouri. Only a small portion of the land was cultivated, and the farms were few and scattered.

An Attractive Locality.
Tontitown to-day differs little in aspect from any prosperous American community. Most of the land around the town is cleared and set out in apples, peaches and grapes. The orchards, together with the natural beauty of the locality, give an Italian aspect to the landscape, and it is not at all strange that the Italian ambassador, after viewing the surroundings, asked if he was really in America or in Italy itself.

Small farms, some only twenty acres, none larger than eighty acres, are the rule, and rapid progress is being made in clearing the land and planting ap-

THINGS LOVELY DOWN IN THE SOUTH

Optimistic Views of New York Capitalists Who Have Their Eyes Turned Southward.

WONDERFUL DEVELOPMENT

The South Makes Better Showing Than the West, Think the Capitalists.

George Byrne, a staff correspondent of the Manufacturers' Record, of Baltimore, the same fine young fellow who came down to Richmond a week or two ago, and had so many good things to say about this dear old town, spent last week in New York, and there he picked up a lot of good information concerning forthcoming Southern development. In an interesting story in the last issue of his paper, he tells something of the temper of New York capitalists concerning Southern development. I quote from him briefly. He says:

"A feeling of optimism seems to pervade the commercial and financial circles of this city, and there is a general expression of confidence that the near future will witness a business activity and industrial expansion that will recall the busy days prior to the depression of 1907. The opinion seems to predominate that the restless spirit that has had possession of so great a proportion of the people of the country will subside with the passage of a few months, leaving a condition of business tranquility conducive to rapid progress."

Down in the South.

"Especially marked is the optimism of the men seen here who are interested in the South with regard to what the immediate future holds in store for that section. The expression is general among them that the South is upon the eve of an era of progress and prosperity such as has been for the last few years enjoyed in such large measure by the West. They seem to feel, indeed, that the record of the West will be surpassed by that of the South. This feeling is based on the fact that the natural resources of the South are of so much more varied

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SOME OUTDOOR FUN FOR COUNTRY FOLK

Views of a Countryman, With Two or More Rather Graphic Illustrations.

PLEASURE FOR HOME FOLKS

Two or Three Practical Thoughts Along an Interesting Subject—Egg Hunts.

BY J. M. BELL.
There is always enough work for the country folk, whether out in the fields, for the men and boys, or in and around the house, for the women and girls. There can be no doubt about the latter having a sufficient amount of work every day in the year to occupy them.

Now, the pleasures of the dwellers in the country might be termed as simple by those who dwell in the large cities, still they are pleasures of the right sort, affording as they do innocent and healthy amusement.

An Illustration.

For instance, there was a big Easter egg hunt for last week in the writers' neighborhood. It was given to the Sunday school children, and what a delightful time the country children had, finding the gaily painted, candy-filled Easter eggs that had been hidden by the grown folks in all sorts of secret nooks around the premises. The gathering was at a hall near the little country church, the hall built by the efforts of the King's Daughters of that neighborhood. It stands near the road and a little back. All around are the fine shade trees, the fallen leaves a brush pile, hollow log or old separating stumps, made ideal places for hiding eggs. Some were even hid under luscious seats. One hid under a cleft in a saddle that was on a gentle pony. Another in the cleft of a saddle that was on a quiet old farm mare.

At a signal from the teachers, the children who had been kept out of sight while the egg-hiding was in progress, were turned loose, figuratively speaking, and then there was a time as they rushed to and from one likely hiding place to another in

(Continued on Third Page.)

REAL ESTATE AND BUILDING NEWS

The Business of a Quiet Week Correctly Recorded.

MUCH BIG TALK; NOT MUCH WORK

Many Deals and Near Deals That Foot Up Well Enough in a Way—An Apartment House Away Out West. Suburbs Getting Busy.

While the past week can hardly be counted a very busy one, so far as new sales of real estate were concerned, yet the agents tell me it was in many respects a very busy week. A great lot of work was done in closing up some pretty stiff deals that had been previously made and previously reported in this column.

There has been a good deal of talk about the extension of Monument Avenue out beyond the present city limits, and some of the agents are taking not a little interest in this movement.

Going Westward.

An enthusiastic realtor, when talking with me on this subject yesterday morning, and he talked mightily fast, so fast that I could hardly take down all he said, opened my eyes somewhat to the possibilities. He may be right or he may be far wrong, but as well as I could get from his rapid talk here is about what he said.

"The extension of Monument Avenue, 140 feet wide, which is its present greatest width, to the Horsepen Road, a distance of more than three and a half miles from the corporate limits of the city of Richmond, is by all odds the most important thing that has been brought to the attention of the people of Richmond for the last decade."

A committee of wide-awake citizens has been working on this project for the last six months, and will make full report of their progress to the Street Committee of the City Council next Tuesday night at 8 o'clock. They have succeeded in gaining the consent of almost every property owner lying along the extension of this new driveway, to open up to the Threepoint Road, to open up this driveway through their farms absolutely free of cost to the city. There is one piece of property, however, that the city of Richmond may have to buy, and that is a strip of land 150 feet long, running through the property of W. S. Forbes, which was recently purchased by him at a very great cost, and which he will sell to the city for the sum of \$18,000, and in consideration of this amount he will deed to the city free of cost necessary for the extension of Grace, Franklin and Gilmour Streets.

Cuts in the Rent Toll.

"Since the rumor of opening up this avenue has been started, a great many people of means have shown an earnest desire to purchase large lots along this new driveway, which would be quite four times as much property as the same cost as land they could get east of Rosemeath Road, and their homes would have somewhat the effect of those in Glinter Park, with wide lawns and deep lots—a great difference to the cramped little narrow strips of land that are occupied as homes by those living east of Rosemeath Road. "Should the city of Richmond elect at this time to take over these magnificent new boulevard, it can do so at only the one expense occasioned by the purchase of the Forbes property. The balance of the distance, nearly 17,000 feet, can be gotten at absolutely nothing, which a little later would cost several hundred thousand dollars to purchase, and from the experience we have had on trying to open Rosemeath Road, a distance of seven city blocks, at a cost of \$1,000, it does seem the height of folly that when nearly three and a half miles of territory is thrown up for absolutely nothing, the city fathers should stand idly by and should not fail to take this chance of a lifetime."

Deeds and Near Deeds.

The agents, generally speaking, were rather busy yesterday closing up various deals they had made. One firm I know of, that is, Thompson, Brown & Co., tell me that they have just closed yesterday with recording papers in various transactions made by them, aggregating over \$100,000. Some of these deals have been previously reported in an index file, which has been prepared for large amounts and valuable property they are worthy of repetition.

Among these deeds recorded was one from Henry S. Hutzler, conveying thirty-three and one-half acres of land on Broad Street Road, for the consideration of \$2,500.

Another deed for a large amount was from Bettie Alice Hicks to Edward Whitlock and Byron Beck, of the property known as the "Hicks' stable," on Second Street, between Broad and Grace Streets. The consideration in this deal, which has been previously reported, was \$25,000. But the interesting part about it is that arrangements have already been made for the pulling down of the old stables and the erection on the ground of several up-to-date storerooms, for which tenants have already been secured. Plans have been accepted for the erection of three stores on the old stable grounds, and it is understood they will be for occupancy in the early fall.

Youngsters to the Front.

The kids in the business, that is to say, Robinson & Phillips, did some little stunts the past week. They sold two houses on Hanover Street, some properties on Clay Street and some other lots in Lee Annex, all of which aggregated something like \$55,000. A pretty good week's work for a new concern, just kids, you know.

A right big sale was pulled off by Ruehrmud & Bowles in the West End.

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